ली है। कार्यक्रम को सफल बनाने के मामले में सामने आई अड़चनों को दूर करने के लिए लगातार प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं।

Hike in prices and shortage of essential drugs

1966. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the indigenously processed medicines are out of the reach of 80 percent of the population of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is chronic shortage of essential drugs in the country; and

(c) if so, the steps already taken/ being taken to ensure the regular availability of these medicines at cheap rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FETRILIZERS (SHRI EDU-ARDO FALEIRO); (a) No, Sir. Most of the commonly used essential and life saving allopathic drugs are under price control. The prices of these medicines are fixed/revised in accordance with provisions of the DPCO, 87 after careful scrutiny of the reconx, mendations of the BICP. This mechanism ensures that the prices fixed/ revised are reasonable and within, the reach of the common man.

(b) While the Government does get reports of temporary shortage of drugs, no case of Chronic shortage of any essential drug has come to the notice of the Government. In most of the cases, the instances were of temporary shortage of some branded formulations in some localised areas, for which other brands or therapeutic equivalents were normally available. As soon as any such shortage is re-ported, the concerned manufacturers are asked to rush stocks to the areas of shortage.

(c) Ensuring abundant availability, at reasonable prices, of essential life saving auil prophylactic medicines of good quality is the main objective of the existing Drug Policy. In the current exercise of review of the Drug Policy also, this objective has been kept uppermost in mind.

Fertilizer plants manufacturing Cap-rolaetuni

1967. SHRI N. E. BALARAM- Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) the names of the fertilizer plants in the country manufacturing capro-lactum indicating the capacity in each plant;

(b) the estimated requirement of eaprolactum in the country;

(c) what is the cost of production of eaprolactum in each of the plants;

(d) whether it is a fact that the price of imported eaprolactum are cheaper than the indigenously produced particularly after the introduction of the new policy foy Government; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to protect the indigenous units against cheap import of eaprolactum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO); (a) and (b) M/s Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Ltd. (FACT) and Gujarat State Fertilizers Company (GSFC) are the only two manufacturers of caprolactam in the country, with installed capacity of 50,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) and 20,000 tpa, respectively. The expansion project of GSFC with additional 50,000 tpa capacity is under commissioning. The estimated requirement of caprolactam is around 90,000 to 100,000 tonnes per annum.

(C) The cost of production of FACTs eaprolactum is estimated at Rs. 63,500/MT. The average cost of production of caprolactam manufactured by GSFC (after commissioning of expansion project) is estimated at Rs. 61,700/MT.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) To give relief to the indigenous caprolactam industry, Government have reduced the customs duty on import of basic raw materials. *In* addition, an increase in customs duty on imported caprolactam has also been announced.

Strike by fact employees

1968. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased In .state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the employees of FACT have decided to observe one day strike on the lath March, 1993 to press for their demands;

(b)if so, the demands of the employees; and

(.c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDU-ARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) The recognised trade unions representing the workmen of FACT have issued a joint notice to the effect that they would be resorting to a one day strike on 15th March, 1993. Tne unions have listed 13 demands which are as follows:-—

1. A CMD may be posted in FACT before 15.3.1993.

2. The customs duty of imported caprolactam may be restored to the original 80 per cent level, as an immediate measure.

3. The ex-refinery price of benzene may be reduced atleast by Rs. 1,600-KL from the current prict of Rs. 13,112/KL,

4. Naptha, Furnace Oil/LSHS consumed for manufacture of Caprolactam may be priced at par with the price prevailing for ferti lizer manufacture.

5. One time capital subsidy may be given to FACT to alleviate the unfavourable impact of customs duty towards the import of plant and equipment and the interest rates on long term loan and working capital Alternatively, the long term Government loan given for the caprolactam project may be treated as interest free,

ti. Fertilizer subsidy should be restored. Gocernm&nt policy is still to subsidise nitrogenous fertilizer. But in practice nitrogenous fertilizer in products like Factamphos (20:20) and DAP (18:46) are not getting any subsidy. This anomaly *may* be rectified.

7. The import of DAP may toe canalised through existing fertilizer companies which have already estab lished extensive marketing net work.

8. Southern Gas Grid may be implemented at the earliest, so that natural gas can be brought to Kerala f-ither from Bombay High or from Nagapattinam Basin and thus the cost of production of Ammonia can be minimised.

9. Oil Exploration may be intensified at Cochin Offshore Basin, thereby natural gas will become locally availaple

10. The proposed 900 TPD Am-mania Plant may be sanctioned without further delay so as to avoid the controversial Ammonia import and the storage tank at Willingdon Island.

11. The Project Report submitted by FACT for the modernisation and extension of FACT Cochin Division may be approved.

12. FACT Management should de sist from closing down Depots.

13. The Captrolactam import may be banned.